

CLAIMS

Please amend the following claims:

1. (currently amended) An ionically complexed colorant compound comprising
 - a) an ionic dye component having an apparent color characteristic;
 - b) a first dye counterion component having a known color characteristic that exhibits a color difference from the ionic dye component of at least about 10 ΔE* units measured in accordance with the CIE L*A*B* color system; and
 - c) a colorless counterion component;wherein the ionic dye component is ionically complexed with the first dye counterion component and colorless counterion component in a predetermined ratio to form an ionically complexed colorant compound exhibiting a predetermined an apparent color modulated by the amount of colorless counterion incorporated in the ionically complexed colorant compound; and wherein the compound has a water solubility of less than 100 parts per million.
2. (original) The ionically complexed colorant compound of claim 1, wherein the colorless counterion component comprises less than about 40% of the total colorant compound by weight.
3. (original) The ionically complexed colorant compound of claim 1, wherein the colorless counterion component comprises less than about 20% of the total colorant compound by weight.
4. (original) The ionically complexed colorant compound of claim 1, wherein the colorless counterion component comprises less than about 10% of the total colorant compound by weight.
5. (cancelled)
6. (original) The ionically complexed colorant compound of claim 1, wherein the compound is substantially free of metal that is not covalently bound to the colorant compound.

7. (original) The ionically complexed colorant compound of claim 1, wherein the compound has a molecular weight of less than about 5000 Daltons.

8. (original) The ionically complexed colorant compound of claim 1, wherein the compound has a molecular weight of less than about 3000 Daltons.

9. (currently amended) The ionically complexed colorant compound of claim 1, wherein the colorant comprises at least three dye components, and each of the three dye components exhibits a color difference from each of the other two dye components of at least about 10 ΔE^* units measured in accordance with the CIE L*A*B* color system.

10. (currently amended) The ionically complexed colorant compound of claim 1, wherein the colorant comprises at least three dye components, and each of the three dye components exhibits a color difference from each of the other two dye components of at least about 20 ΔE^* units measured in accordance with the CIE L*A*B* color system.

11. (original) The ionically complexed colorant compound of claim 1, wherein the dye component comprises a plurality of ionic functionalities.

12. (currently amended) An ionically complexed colorant composition comprising
a) an ionic dye component having an apparent color characteristic;
b) a first dye counterion component having a known color characteristic that exhibits a color difference from the ionic dye component of at least about 10 ΔE^* units measured in accordance with the CIE L*A*B* color system; and
c) a colorless counterion component;

wherein the ionic dye component, the first dye counterion component and the colorless counterion component are ionically complexed in a predetermined ratio to form ionically complexed compounds that together in a colorant composition exhibit a predetermined an apparent color modulated by the amount of colorless counterion incorporated in the

ionically complexed colorant compounds; and wherein the compounds have a water solubility of less than 100 parts per million.

13. (currently amended) The ionically complexed colorant composition of claim 12, wherein the composition comprises at least three dye components, and each of the three dye components exhibits a color difference from each of the other two dye components of at least about 10 ΔE^* units measured in accordance with the CIE L*A*B* color system.

14-23. (cancelled)